

Constitution

Updated: 28 October 2020

As adopted by the official representatives of the Member-Associations at their meetings held at Oxford on 14 and 15 September 1954, during the 6th International Congress of the Federation; and including amendments adopted at Heidelberg (7th International Congress) on 25 August 1957; at Strasbourg (10th International Congress) on 28 August 1966; in Paris (at a meeting of the Committee) on 4 July 1977; at Budapest (16th International Congress) on 21 August 1984; at an electronic meeting of the Committee on 19 October 2012; at Vienna on 12 July 2018 (at a meeting of the Committee); and at an online meeting of the Committee on 26 July 2020.

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Aims of the Federation

1. The general aim and purpose of the Federation shall be the promotion, development and encouragement of the scholarly study of modern and medieval languages and literatures.
2. This general aim shall be pursued through forms of international scholarly cooperation which bring together detailed research on particular topics with themes and approaches of global relevance and general application.
3. In particular, the Federation shall
 - (a) organize at regular intervals through the agency of its Committee (see Section 10 below) an International Congress devoted to modern and medieval languages and literatures;
 - (b) arrange for the publication of works of scholarship which fulfill the Federation's aims as stated under (1) and (2) above;
 - (c) draw the attention of the general public to outstanding achievements in linguistic and literatures scholarship from all over the world;
 - (d) actively lobby for the world-wide maintenance and improvement of education and research in the field of languages and literatures;
 - (e) maintain a website and web-newsletter as a discussion forum for scholars in the field of languages and literatures world-wide.

Liaison with other International Bodies

4. The Federation shall maintain close relations with such kindred international federations as its Committee may from time to time determine.

Composition

5. The Federation shall be composed of international associations, including associations which are continental and regional, which fall into one of the following categories:

- (a) associations dedicated to the furtherance of the language and/or literature of one particular nation or grouping;
- (b) associations dedicated to the furtherance of studies in a subject or subjects pertaining to a number of languages and/or literatures;
- (c) associations dedicated to the furtherance of studies in modern and medieval languages and/or literatures in general;
- (d) associations dedicated to the study of particular literary writers and groups of literary writers.

Qualifications for Membership

6. Every association desiring to become a member of the Federation shall fulfil the following requirements:

- (a) It shall be international in its aims and outlook, free of political aims and independent of any form of external control;
- (b) Its membership shall be open to scholars of any nationality
- (c) It shall be governed by a constitution agreed by its members, controlled by Officers and a Committee elected regularly;
- (d) It shall have a membership of not less than 50 and comprising scholars of not less than five self-governing nations;
- (e) It shall have functioned efficiently and constitutionally for a period of not less than two years before it shall be admitted to membership of the Federation.

Admission to Membership

7. Associations desiring to become members of the Federation shall apply formally to the Committee of the Federation, furnishing such evidence of their qualifications as the Committee may require and agreeing to abide by the Constitution of the Federation. The Committee, after considering the evidence submitted, shall have power to approve or reject the applications, provided always that approval of membership shall require the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of the Committee.

Termination of Membership

8. An association may terminate its membership by giving three months' formal notice in writing to the Secretary-General.

9. The Committee shall have power to terminate the membership of any association which has ceased to fulfil the requirements for membership or which has ceased to adhere to the aims of the Federation.

Management of the Federation

10. The affairs of the Federation shall be managed by a Committee regularly elected or appointed as described below. It shall comprise:

(a) The Officers of the Federation who shall be members of the Committee ex officio and

(b) Other members

Officers of the Federation

The Officers of the Federation shall comprise: a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary-General, not more than seven Assistant Secretaries-General, a Treasurer, a Communications Officer with responsibility for the Federation's webpage and web-newsletter, and such other assistant officers as the Committee shall deem necessary.

11. The Officers shall be regularly elected by secret ballot on a simple majority vote of the representatives of the member-associations at a meeting of the Committee specially called for this purpose; such meeting shall, if possible, be held during an International Congress sponsored by the Federation.

12. Appointments shall normally be made for three years but may, in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Committee, be extended up to a maximum period of five years. The Committee shall have power, for a grave cause, to terminate an appointment before the end of the prescribed period.

13. With the exception of the President, Officers shall be eligible for re-election. Vice-Presidents shall be eligible for re-election on one occasion only.

Other Members of Committee

14. The Immediate Past President of FILLM shall be a member of the FILLM Committee until her or his successor as President has been replaced;

15. Each member-association shall appoint one representative to be a member of the Committee. Such representative shall be a subscribing member of the association concerned and shall normally be an officer of that association.

16. Member-associations may change their regular representatives or may nominate proxies, provided always that formal notice of such changes is sent to the Secretary-General of the Federation. Any change of regular representative shall not become effective until one month after such notification.

Meetings of Committee

17. The Committee shall normally meet once between its International Congresses in an agreed place for the transaction of current business. Notice of the Meeting, together with an agenda of the subjects to be discussed, shall be sent by the Secretary-General to the Secretaries of the member-associations and to their regular representatives not less than two calendar months before the proposed date of the meeting.

Decisions taken by the Committee concerning business of which the prescribed notice has been given shall come into effect at a date to be determined by the Committee. In the case of business of which, for reasons of urgency or other grave cause, it has not been possible to give the required notice, the decisions or recommendations of the Committee shall be communicated to member-associations and shall be formally ratified and take effect at the next meeting of the Committee.

18. No meeting of the Committee shall be valid unless it is attended by a minimum of a simple majority of the representatives of the member-associations. When circumstances require this, Committee decisions can be taken via email. In such cases, the decision is valid provided that a simple majority of the representatives of the member-associations have voted.

19. Except for matters concerning admissions to membership (point 7) or amendments to the Constitution (point 25), all decisions of the Committee shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present or, for decisions taken via email, by a simple majority of the members voting. The President shall have a casting vote.

FILLM Executive Officers and Executive Working Group

20. Executive Officers of FILLM are responsible to implement decisions of the Federation and to oversee its good governance on behalf of the Committee.

21. The Executive Officers of FILLM are: (i) the President; (ii & iii) the Vice-Presidents; (iv) the Secretary-General; (v) the Treasurer; and (vi) the Communications Officer.

22. The Executive Officers of FILLM, acting collectively, serve as an Executive Working Group. The Executive Working Group may act on behalf of the FILLM Committee and with its delegated authority.

23. Any FILLM Executive Officer may ask the Executive Working Group to endorse a decision or action that would carry the delegated authority of the FILLM Committee.

24. Decisions of the Executive Working Group will be approved by the agreement of a majority of the serving Executive Officers.

25. FILLM Executive Officers must report to the Committee any action that the Executive Working Group decides to take under the Committee's delegated authority no more than 1 calendar month after deciding upon that action. If this requirement-to-report is met, the Committee's delegated authority for that action will hold until a subsequent decision by the Committee should supersede it.

26. The FILLM Committee retains the power to rescind or amend any decision of the Executive Working Group, and to prevent or to alter the implementation of any such decisions.

Decisions and actions of the Executive Working Group will be subject to this Constitution, and to any policies or resolutions that the Committee may adopt from time to time.

Finances

27. The finances of the Federation required for its administrative expenses shall be derived from annual subscriptions made by its member-associations; the scale of the subscriptions shall be decided from time to time by the Committee, after due consultation with member-associations. The finances of the Federation shall be managed by the Committee, acting through the Treasurer.

28. The Treasurer shall submit a statement of accounts and balance sheet for each calendar year. At each meeting of the Committee, the Treasurer shall present such statements regarding the calendar years not yet accounted for. All such statements shall also be sent to the Presidents and representatives of the member-associations.

29. The Committee shall have power to accept bequests, gifts, subscriptions or subventions on behalf of the Federation. No monies of the Federation shall be applied for the sole benefit of any of its member-associations.

Amendments to the Constitution

30. Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed to the Committee by any member-association or to member-associations by the Committee. The text of any amendment proposed must be communicated to each member-association not less than six months before the meeting of the Committee at which the amendment is to be voted upon.

31. Any amendment to the Constitution shall require the approval of at least two-thirds of the member-associations, and shall become effective three calendar months after the meeting of the Committee at which it is formally adopted.

Dissolution of the Federation

32. The Federation shall automatically be dissolved if the number of international associations represented in it falls below four. It may be dissolved at any time for other reasons by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee of the Federation.

33. In the event of dissolution, the Committee for the time being shall be responsible for the liquidation of the affairs of the Federation and for the disposal of its assets.

Seat of the Federation

34. The official seat of the Federation shall be at Paris.